1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

439 to be mentioned pottery from Guanajuato (and even from Oaxaca), dried meat from *tierra caliente*, cattle, and horses. Machinery and tools made in industrial establishments include axes, saws, hoes, hatchets, plow points, engines (for *nixtamal* mills), sewing machines, flat irons, and, quite rarely, radios, phonographs, typewriters, and trucks. The functioning of the principal distributive agencies will now be examined in some detail.

TRADERS

441 A fair number of men in Cherán who engage
439 in trade are known as *arrieros* or *viajeros*. Whether there is any distinction between the two is uncertain. The impression received—and it is no more than an impression—is that originally the *arrieros* traveled to distant places outside of Tarascan territory, while the *viajeros* traded among the local villages. At present the two terms seem to be used as synonyms.

In the town voting register a number of men are listed as *arrieros*. Nevertheless, so far as could be learned, none of them dedicates all his time to trade. At the same time, there were numerous other men listed as farmers or laborers, yet who make fairly regular trading trips. The main distinction seems to be that a man listed as an *arriero* ordinarily makes about three long trips a year, while other men may make only one. Some men who make fairly regular short trips are not listed as traders. For example, one man who carries palm leaves regularly to the Paracho market is not included.

The main season for trading is from late fall until June, that is, the dry season. The principal routes followed for long trips are to Guerrero, Coalcomán, and Colima. A good many shorter trips may be taken to local fiestas, especially the great fiesta and market at San Juan Parangaricutiro. In addition, some men go to Guadalajara and Celaya for goods to carry to Guerrero. Finally, a long trip usually involves a number of short local trips around Cherán, either to purchase goods for transport to the *tierra caliente* or to dispose of merchandise brought back.

[462] The *arrieros* are all men, with a single exception (reported but not seen). Wives, however, frequently accompany their husbands. Sickness is the greatest hazard. Women are

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[9,772] Sierra Tarascans

441 439 [927] believed to be more resistant to the illnesses of *tierra caliente*, and tales are told of women who saved their husbands by nursing them or by bringing them back to the healthful highlands. For this reason, traders rarely go alone, although large parties are rare. The major [641] disease appears to be malaria. Insects, especially one attacking the feet, are mentioned as a great bother.

[674] Robbers are also a source of danger; however, the most traveled route—that to Guerrero—is said to be entirely safe. Some of the greatest dangers on the route to Coalcomán or Colima seem to have been in Tarascan territory. The village of Capacuaro had a particularly evil reputation at one time.

[492] Goods are ordinarily transported by burros. A poor man may have to carry goods on his back. The *arrieros* never ride except when [497] seriously ill. An exception is that journeys to [494] Celaya are made on the train, while nearby trips may sometimes be made by bus since construction of the highway.

The first step in a trading expedition is the assembling of goods for the trip. These may consist of pears from Cherán; apples from Pichataro; wooden products (*"tornillo"*) from Paracho; sweetpotatoes from San Francisco; fine pottery (not cooking ware) from La Cañada, Guadalajara, or Quiroga; oils and spices from Pátzcuaro; dolls, pottery, and other goods from Celaya. Most of the goods carried by Cherán traders, however, are local in origin, i.e., within the Tarascan area. In such cases, trade goods either are assembled by one or more short preliminary purchasing trips or are bought en route. Guadalajara pottery requires a 7- or 8-day trip each way with burros. Celaya goods, as stated, involve a trip by train.

On the return trip various products are brought. From Guerrero come dried fish, dried beef, gourds, gourd containers, coconuts, and cheese, the last being most important. Few data were obtained on the products brought from Coalcomán, as few Cherán traders make this trip, but cheese and dried beef are probably the most important items. However, the one trader to give specific information bought beeswax. Chiles are brought from Colima.

Generally the goods brought back are not sold until Cherán is reached. Then they are

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p.776] Sierra Tarascans

439 441 sold locally (usually a minor part) or taken to the weekly Paracho market or to fiestas in nearby towns. Often goods are kept some weeks if there is a prospect of a scarcity developing, or an important fiesta is scheduled.

The majority of the long trips are to Guerrero, usually to Petatlán, where the fiesta of Holy Week attracts the greatest number of Cherán traders. The length of the trip taken depends to some extent on the rapidity with which goods are sold; once stocks are exhausted, traders turn back. One trader reported having reached Acapulco on one of his trips.

Some typical trips follow:

441 439 487 M. F. goes on Sunday to Paracho, where he awaits his trading partner from another town. Monday the two go to San Francisco and buy sweetpotatoes. Thursday they arrive in Tepic (Colima) and sell the sweetpotatoes. Friday they go to Guajuya (Jalisco) and buy chiles. Monday they return to Tepic and Saturday M. F. reaches Cherán. The trip involves 12 days' traveling and 2 days' resting, buying, and selling.

The schedule in detail is as follows:

Sunday	Paracho
Monday	San Francisco
Tuesday	Periban
Wednesday	Buena Vista
Thursday	Tepic
Friday	Guajuya
Monday	Tepic
Tuesday	Buena Vista
Wednesday	Periban
Thursday	San Francisco
Friday	Paracho
Saturday	Cherán

Some traders go to Colima proper by way of Zaragoza, but details were not obtained. It is 17 days' travel each way.

M. F. also goes to Coalcomán, carrying pottery from La Cañada which he buys in Cherán or Paracho. The route is the same as far as Tepic. Thence he stops at Obregón, Las Parotas, and Coalcomán. The round trip takes 3 weeks, of which 18 days are spent in traveling.

On his trips to Petatlán, Guerrero, M. F. buys wooden toys from Paracho and pottery from Santo Tomas. Starting on a Thursday, he goes to Pichataro. On Friday (market day) he is in Pátzcuaro and buys garlic, oils, and

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p.78e] Sierra Tarascans

441 439 487 spices (*marjoram, pincente*, etc.) The trip to Petatlán takes a total of 18 days (see itinerary below); San Gerónimo is 5 days farther. A round trip usually takes about 6 weeks.

J. G. also leaves on a Thursday. Leaving his burro at Pátzcuaro, he goes to Quiroga to buy pottery (probably on the bus, as he does not take his burros). Returning to Pátzcuaro, on one trip he bought 500 strings of garlic, 15 liters of oils at $1.50 a liter (salad oil, olive oil, *aceites de razar, malza mantequilla, canaldo, mastral*, and *verbena*), and spices (*pimiente*, rosemary, *mandruje, flor de azalco*, and *manzanilla boraja*), and 2½ dozen wooden spoons of assorted sizes.

At Paso de la Vaca, J. G. began to sell a little, but only enough to buy food (he had run out of money). His itinerary is similar to that of M. F., but he made one more stop. On his return he loaded one burro with dried meat and rode the other because he was sick. For the same reason he spent 8 days at one place. The two itineraries follow:

Arrive	*M. F.*	*J. G.*
Pichataro	Thursday	Thursday
Pátzcuaro	Friday	Friday
Santa Clara	Saturday	Saturday
Ario de Rosales	Sunday	Sunday
Alinonzita	Monday	.....
Corral de Piedras	.....	Monday
Cayaco	Tuesday	Tuesday
Guadaloupe	Wednesday	Wednesday
Río de las Balsas	Thursday	Thursday
Paso de las Vacas	Friday	Friday (began to sell)
Límón	Saturday (began to sell)	.....
Zopilote	.....	Saturday
Tepehuaje	Sunday	Sunday
Colmenaros	Monday	Monday
La Unión	Tuesday	Tuesday
La Onía (close to Pacific from here on)	Wednesday	Wednesday
Pantla	Thursday	Thursday
Puerto Sijuatanejo	Friday	Friday
Cuicuayul	.....	Saturday
San Geronimito	Saturday	Sunday
Petatlán	Sunday	Monday

San Gerónimo is 5 days' traveling beyond Petatlán; Acapulco is 6 days' traveling from San Gerónimo.

Another example is C. S. C. who makes only one trip a year, a visit to Holy Week in Petatlán, Guerrero. He carries woodwork from

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p.178] Sierra Tarascans

441 Paracho and brings back coconuts and dried meat. He normally travels only a half day. 439 (However, his half day would mean a dawn 487 start and continuing normally until midafternoon.) His stops are as follows: Pichataro, Sirawén, Ario, Las Palmas, La Playa, Cayaco, Guadaloupe, Las Balsas, Corcoles, La Limón, Tepehuaje, Colmeneros, La Unión, Pantla, Puerto Sijuatanejo, San Geronimito, and Petatlán.

441 *Arrieros* probably have superior techniques [492] for handling burros. *Criolina* is carried for treating saddle sores, and burros are shod "when the burro catches cold in his feet." Dysentery (*"posición"*) is the most frequent cause of loss of burros on trips.

Arrieros also observe special ceremonies. A [782] candle and prayer are offered to San Antonio before going on a trip, and thanks are rendered on return. The *arrieros* also maintain a *mayordomía* for San Antonio, which is described elsewhere.

In general, knowledge of the economics of the *arrieros'* activities is unsatisfactory. It would be extremely difficult to gain an accurate idea of the amount of goods exchanged by this method or to discover the monetary or other rewards obtained by the *arriero.*

The importance of the *arriero* class un- 178 doubtedly will wane rapidly with the extension of highways and truck trails. Already the importance of the *arriero* in the Coalcomán region has greatly diminished as a result of truck trails opened up in recent years. When a direct connection is made between the highland and the developing truck trail system in the Balsas Basin, the *arriero* probably will rapidly disappear.

TRANSPORTATION

As has been indicated at various points in 492 the preceding pages, the burro is the most common means of transportation still, supplemented occasionally by horses or mules. Poor traders may even make long journeys carrying their goods on their backs. Nevertheless, a revolution in transportation is under way in Cherán.

One alteration in the transportation picture 494 is the truck which picks up bulk goods in Cherán for markets that formerly were closed to these items. As much as 4,000 kilos of wheat has

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 91-2]

325 old smiths, who work at their trade only part time, represented the remnant of a once thriving home industry.

[439] The former source of metal for the San Felipe smiths is problematical. According to a local informant, during the 1880's "*planchas de hierro*" were brought in from Cotija, a muleteer and trade center having close connections with the *tierra caliente* and the Sierra of Guerrero. This information points to Coalcomán in the Sierra Madre del Sur of Guerrero as the principal source of iron. Other ironworking towns of Michoacán include Irimbo and Nahuatzen. Mestizos in the latter pueblo fashion knives and machetes.

STONECUTTING

324 Stonework among modern Tarascans is limited to approximately 12 metate makers in Turícuaro.
[438] Formerly this village was noted throughout Michoacán for the high-quality *metates* (iauáni), *manos* (poɹékua), and *molcajetes* (šúmatakua) carved from a fine-grained andesite (ɹakápu amákiti, or "good stone"), found near the summit of the composite volcano Kanákuaráni (Cerro de la Corona) nearby. Since the introduction (ca.
[256] 1925) of the engine-powered nixtamal mills in mestizo and larger indigenous towns, demand for new *metates* has sharply declined.[161]

Metates and *molcajetes* are roughly shaped at the quarry on Kanákuaráni and are carried down to the pueblo on burro for finishing in the stonecutter's house. Stone is worked with steel tools,
[412] e. g. the pick (píkua) and sledge hammer (píkuak'éri), and is finished with a polishing stone (janámu). Several sizes of *metates* are made and sold to traveling merchants who pass through the town.

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

438 The structure of trade among the Tarascans is
441 not dissimilar to that of most Indian groups of central Mexico. Although every settlement has at least one store where general merchandise can be purchased, most trading is done at the *tianguis*, or market, held regularly in the larger towns. Throughout the area professional traders—*huacaleros* (who carry merchandise on their backs), *arrieros* (who haul products on the backs of burros), and lately, wholesale buyers from the

[161] According to local informants, in 1912 practically every family in the village made *metates*. Since that time most of the villagers have turned to woodwork (mainly *batea*).

[P. 718]

438
441 large mestizo towns (who ride in trucks and buses)—all serve as distributing agents.

443 **The market (uašájpikuaru, or "the place where**
438 **people sit").**—Sunday is the most important market day for the Tarascans.[182] Large groups of Indians from neighboring pueblos flock to the regular markets held in the large mestizo towns within or on the edge of the Tarascan area. Since colonial times Paracho has been the largest Indian commercial center of the Sierra. To the south Los Reyes and Uruapan are the exchange centers for *tierra caliente* and *tierra fría* merchandise.[183] A lesser number of Indians attend the northern market towns: Zamora, Tingüindín, Purépero, Zacapu, and Chilchota (the commercial center for the La Cañada pueblos). Generally speaking, each large Sunday market draws upon a certain Indian area defined by a walking or riding distance of one day or less (map 21). On occasion, however, the Pátzcuaro or Uruapan *tianguis* is visited by Indians who live more than 1 day's travel away. In the Sierra often the entire family attends the regular market, leaving Saturday with handicrafts or farm products (usually fruit, chickens, or eggs) packed on burros, and arriving at the plaza at night.[184] Sunday morning is a time of brisk trading. By afternoon most of the traders have sold their wares, purchased supplies, and have departed for their respective pueblos. The Lake Pátzcuaro fishers got to market in boats, carrying fish and vegetables to Pátzcuaro, Erongarícuaro, and Quiroga to trade for maize, wheat, and firewood.

Lesser markets are regularly held in a few smaller Indian towns. For example, there is a Sunday market at Charapan, attended by people from Cocucho, Urapicho, Corupo, San Felipe, and Nurío. On Saturdays and Mondays there is some commercial activity in Cherán, as professional traders pass through the town going to and coming from the Sunday Uruapan market (Beals, 1946, p. 80). Again, on Thursdays

———— [Text continues top of P. 738 — Analyst]

[184] An important exception is the Pátzcuaro market held on Fridays and Sundays. A minor fish market occurs also on Tuesdays.

[183] Formerly Peribán was one of the largest *tierra caliente—tierra fría* markets in Michoacán, but since the close of the colonial era it has ceded most of its trade to Los Reyes nearby. Important fiesta markets are still held in Peribán however.

[494] [184] Within the last 8 years the pueblos along the Uruapan highway have ridden busses or taxis to market. Since 1943 similar transport has been extended to Charapan, Zirosto, and intermediate pueblos. Moreover, during the dry season lumber trucks haul loads of men and women from some Sierra towns to mestizo markets.